

REMARKS

The Pending Claims

Claims 1-37 are pending currently. Claims 1-21 are directed to a method for producing a polishing pad comprising providing a porous polymer structure, compressing at least a region of the porous polymer structure to provide a translucent region, and forming a polishing pad comprising the porous polymer structure, whereby a polishing pad is produced comprising the translucent region. Claims 22-24 are directed to a polishing pad produced by the method above. Claims 25-29 are directed to a polishing pad comprising a region that is at least translucent, wherein the translucent region is porous. Claims 30-33 are directed to a method of polishing a substrate using a polishing pad produced by the method above. Claims 34-37 are directed to a method of polishing a substrate using a polishing pad comprising a region that is at least translucent, wherein the translucent region is porous. Reconsideration of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

Summary of the Office Action

Claims 1, 2, 7-11, 13-16, 18-20, 22-27, and 29-37 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Newell (i.e., U.S. Patent 6,537,134). Claims 3-6 and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Newell.

Discussion of the Anticipation and Obviousness Rejections

The anticipation and obviousness rejections are respectfully traversed.

Newell does not disclose a method for producing a polishing pad comprising compressing at least a region of a porous polymer structure to provide a translucent region. The Office Action cites Newell at col. 4, lines 8-12, alleging the passage discloses compression of a porous polymer structure to form a translucent region. The passage at col. 4, lines 8-12, states that “the polishing pad can be formed from the matrix polymer, before or after combining with the filler, by any method known in the art.” Newell goes on to state that suitable methods include “casting, cutting, injection molding, or pressing the matrix polymer into the desired polishing pad shape.” The referenced passage of Newell, however, refers to methods for forming a *polishing pad*, and not to methods of forming a *translucent region* of a polishing pad. In that respect, the “pressing” of the matrix polymer is not intended to, and does not inherently, result in the formation of a translucent region. With regard to producing a translucent region, Newell discloses a method comprising filling at least a portion of the pores of a region of a matrix polymer with a filler. In particular, Newell describes, at col. 4,

In re Appln. of Jones et al.
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lines 20-31, methods by which the pores of the matrix polymer can be filled. Thus, Newell achieves the goal of forming a translucent region using a completely different method.


Moreover, there is nothing in Newell that suggests a method of producing a translucent region by compressing a region of a porous polymer structure. Newell teaches a method of converting an opaque porous material to a translucent material by filling a portion of the pores of a matrix polymer. Compressing the pores of a matrix polymer is contrary to the teaching of Newell since compressing the pores would preclude their being filled with a filler. Accordingly, Newell teaches away from the inventive method recited in the pending claims.

Since the cited reference fails to teach or suggest each and every element of the invention as recited in the pending claims, the anticipation and obviousness rejections are improper and should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

The application is considered in good and proper form for allowance, and the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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